VLR SAFETY TAILGATE TALK

November 2016

Subject: ***Smoke Detectors***

Date: _____

Location (garage, mm, etc…):

Instructions:

Safety Coordinators & Supervisors should use this Tailgate Talk as a guide for discussion during their safety meetings. The primary purpose of the safety meetings is to give crews the opportunity to discuss any safety related concerns they may have.

Once the meeting has concluded, the Presenter should have each employee sign this form and include their Employee ID# in the spaces below.

TGT Presenter: _____

Name	Employee
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Smoke detectors are life saving devices that sound an alarm when rising smoke is detected. In today's market, there are many brands, but only two basic types.

- **Ionization chamber detectors.** This type uses a radioactive source that produces electrically charged molecules (ions) in the air. This produces an electric current within the detector's chamber. When smoke enters the chamber, it attaches itself to the ions. When this happens, the flow of current is reduced, setting off the alarm.
- **Photoelectric detectors.** These detectors activate when smoke entering the chamber is dense enough to deflect a beam of light inside the detector, causing the alarm to sound.

Batteries or the electrical system in your workplace can power either style of detector. Battery powered smoke detectors will emit a "beep" every minute or so when the battery power gets too low and needs replacement. Detectors powered by your workplace's electrical system are vulnerable to power failures, if not designed with a battery backup. Many building codes now require hard-wired systems on newly constructed buildings.

Maintenance

Smoke detectors do not need a lot of attention, except for regular testing and immediate replacement of bulbs or batteries when necessary. Test your detectors at least once every month by carefully holding a candle approximately six inches under it. If it is an ionization detector, let the flame burn. If it is a photoelectric unit, extinguish the candle and let visible smoke drift into the detector. To stop the alarm, fan the smoke away. Using real smoke is more dependable than pressing the "test" button found on may units. The "test" button only activates the warning buzzer and does not tell you whether the actual detecting circuit is working.

Buy Quality

Buy quality detectors that have a laboratory seal of approval or statement on the unit that the detector has been tested and certified by a recognized testing organization. This is the only practical way to ascertain that the unit meets an adequate standard of operation and sensitivity. Always mail in the unit's warranty card, so you will be informed of any product problems or recalls.

Placement

Install detectors in areas that are not normally occupied and have the potential for a fire to start, i.e.: areas where there is a source of fuel, a source of heat, and oxygen. Do not place them closer than six inches of where walls and ceilings meet, or near heating and cooling ducts. In these locations, the air movement may be too slow or too fast to allow adequate smoke accumulations to activate the detector. It is suggested that electrically wired systems be wired together, so all alarms will activate no matter where the fire is located. This will reduce the chance of smoke inhalation while providing early warning of fire in another area. It also aids in prompt evacuation.